

O 040959Z JUN 03  
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0287  
INFO ASEAN COLLECTIVE  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 000922

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/03/2008

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [BM](#) [CB](#)

SUBJECT: CAMBODIAN FOREIGN MINISTER SUPPORTS RELEASE OF  
AUNG SAN SUU KYI

REF: STATE 146687

CLASSIFIED BY: AMBASSADOR CHARLES A. RAY. REASON: 1.5 (B) (D).

[1](#)1. (C) DURING A JUNE 4 MEETING ON THE CAMBODIAN ELECTIONS AND COUNTER-TERRORISM COOPERATION (SEPTTEL), THE AMBASSADOR ASKED FOREIGN MINISTER HOR NAMHONG TO WEIGH IN WITH THE SPDC TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF AUNG SAN SUU KYI. OBSERVING THAT THE DETENTION OF AUNG SAN SUU KYI ADVERSELY AFFECTED THE REPUTATION OF ASEAN AS A WHOLE, THE AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED THAT CAMBODIA AS THE ASEAN CHAIR COULD PLAY A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN CONVINCING THE SPDC TO RELEASE HER.

[1](#)2. (C) INDICATING THAT HE WAS AWARE OF THE INTERNATIONAL OUTRAGE AT THE DETENTION, HOR NAMHONG RESPONDED THAT HE HAD JUST GIVEN AN INTERVIEW TO NHK, THE JAPANESE TELEVISION NETWORK. HE SAID THAT HE HAD RELATED TO NHK THAT ASEAN HAD BEEN PLEASED WITH THE DEVELOPMENTS IN BURMA OVER THE LAST COUPLE OF YEARS, INCLUDING AUNG SAN SUU KYI'S RELEASE FROM HOUSE ARREST, THE DIALOGUE WITH THE SPDC AND THE FREEDOM SHE HAD TO MOVE AROUND THE COUNTRY. NOW, HE SAID, ASEAN WAS "NOT VERY HAPPY." HOR NAMHONG SAID THAT HE COMMENTED THAT HE HOPED THE SITUATION WOULD SOON RETURN TO NORMAL. THE FOREIGN MINISTER ADDED THAT ASEAN'S PRINCIPLE OF NON-INTERFERENCE IN THE INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF MEMBER COUNTRIES PREVENTED HIM FROM TAKING DIRECT ACTION WITH BURMA UNLESS INVITED. HE NOTED TO THE AMBASSADOR ALSO THAT BURMA'S ACTIONS WOULD BE A TOPIC FOR DISCUSSION AT THE ARF/PMC MEETINGS.

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT. WHILE NOT PERHAPS AS MUCH AS WE WANTED FROM HOR NAMHONG, HIS PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF UNHAPPINESS WITH THE SPDC'S ACTIONS IS PROBABLY THE MOST WE COULD HOPE FOR. THE ARF WILL, OF COURSE, PROVIDE A FORUM FOR CONCERNED NATIONS TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS ON THE SPDC.

RAY